

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Archie Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:07p.m. Executive Session, Mr. Durant made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters to go into Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under General Laws of Rhode Island 42-46-5 (a) (1) Interview Director of Technology/Systems Analyst and (a) (2) Collective Bargaining-Paraprofessional Contract. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

Those in attendance were: Dr. Deidre Gifford, Chair; Mr. Robert Durant, Vice-Chair; Mrs. Susan Records; Mr. David Green; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, and Mr. Jack Sommer. Mr. Paul Martin was absent. Also present were Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Paula Dillon, Assistant Superintendent, and Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration..

7:05p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

The regular session of the East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the library of the Archie Cole Middle School at 7:05

p.m. by Chair Dr. Deidre Gifford. Dr. Gifford announced there were two votes taken in Executive Session. Both votes were unanimous. One vote was to ratify the tentative agreement of the paraprofessional contract and the other vote was regarding the Director of Technology position.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. Public Comments

Ms. Dawn Huffman asked if full day kindergarten is being considered and also questioned how the standards of the common core can be met during half day kindergarten. Dr. Gifford explained that full day kindergarten was discussed during previous School Committee administrations and it was decided not to pursue full day kindergarten. An Ad Hoc Committee was just charged to examine the grade configurations in the four elementary schools. Dr. Mercurio explained the make-up of the committee and the goal of making long-term decisions. Dr. Gifford added that this committee will function more like a strategic/policy group. Two public forums will be held to gather feedback from parents. Mr. Durant may be the School Committee liaison. The group will start their work in a week and will report back to the School Committee prior to the February 2012 break. Mrs. JoAnne Leach, a Teacher at Cole, expressed thanks to community members, parents, teachers, and staff who generously donated to the NEA Rhode Island Children's Fund.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular and Executive for 11/22/11

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the regular and executive minutes for 11/22/11 were approved 6-0.

V. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Mercurio noted the World Language Group has started meeting regarding the exploration of new foreign languages. The next meeting is scheduled for December 22nd. Mr. Paul Martin is the School Committee member on the Committee. Commissioner Gist has approved a two hour delay for the start of school during inclement weather and will count the delay as a full school day. This is in effect until April. If parents need to be added to Alert Now, they need to contact their child's school directly.

VI. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Green discussed the topic of School Committee annual objectives and goals. Goals and objectives need to be aligned with the superintendent and funneled to the instructional staff. Dr. Gifford noted the ideal time to tackle this project is in the summer in order to prepare for the budgeting cycle for the upcoming year. Dr. Gifford would like to discuss math at Cole and the Orchestra at the high school at the next meeting.

VII. Action Items

a. Appointments

On a motion by Mr. Sommer, which was seconded by Mr. Green, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve appointments #1-5.

- 1. Cole Co-Advisor National Junior Honor Society-Megan Catelli**
- 2. EGHS Volunteer Boys' Basketball-Matthew Streich**
- 3. EGHS Volunteer Boys' Hockey-Chad Wingren**

4. EGHS Volunteer Boys' Hockey-Don Dunwoody

5. EGHS Volunteer Boys' Hockey-Chris DellaGrotta

b. Field Trip- Cole Middle School, Ski Trip, Sunday River, Maine, January 20-22, 2012

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Durant, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the Cole Field Trip.

c. Second Read/Adoption of New / Revised Policies

1. Policy #2156 Lunch Credit Limits (new policy)

Policy #2156 was discussed in depth especially item #3 – the policy of substituting a cheese sandwich for a hot lunch when a student has charged a total of three lunches and no payment has been received. This new policy will go into effect on January 1, 2012.

School and district list servs will be used to notify parents. Parents' will be reminded they can check their balance on NutriKids.com and also see if there are any outstanding charges. On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to adopt new policy #2156 Lunch Credit Limits with an effective date of January 1, 2012.

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to adopt policies listed in #2-10.

2. Policy #2110 Superintendent's Responsibilities

3. Policy #2115 Fire Safety Drills

4. Policy #2140 Administrative Lines of Responsibility

5. Policy #2155 Free and Reduced Price Meals and/or Free Milk

6. Policy #2165 Student Questionnaires

- 7. Policy #2170 Use and Display of Student Social Security Numbers**
- 8. Policy #2175 School Based Health Centers**
- 9. Policy #2185 Silent Meditation at the Commencement of the School Day**

- 10. Policy #2195 Pledge of Allegiance**

- d. Rankings of Finance Committee Recommendations**

The rankings of the Finance Committee recommendations were discussed in depth. New recommendation #8 (cost benefits/analysis of tablet computers) led to considerable discussion regarding whether this decision should be made by educators. Dr. Gifford would like this item addressed at the next meeting by Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Dillon advising how a policy can be initiated to address this recommendation. Mrs. Records will submit a draft policy for the procurement of software and hardware for presentation at the policy committee meeting. Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Dillon were asked to discuss the process that has been used to purchase technology at the next meeting. Recommendation #5 (facility rentals) is no longer an issue. Dr. Gifford requested an inventory of the Varnum facility for a January or February meeting. Mr. Durant discussed recommendation #6 (program review committee) noting the district needs to examine programs to get the best “bang for the buck.” Programs need to be reviewed prior to the budgeting process. Dr. Gifford would consider a committee that would set guidelines and parameters for ranking programs. Dr. Gifford will re-write the recommendation for the next meeting. Mrs. Dillon asked if a timeline could be in place for the strategic plan and common core. Item 7/8

(asset tracking) was discussed by Mrs. Crawford. She noted that \$500 is low for asset tracking. A software program was purchased previously that can be used for tracking assets. Dr. Gifford will refer this recommendation to the Policy Committee and ask that a policy be initiated. Mrs. Records would like to re-write # 7/8 which discusses a single operating system. Item #9 (budgeting discussion at administrative council) will be rejected. Recommendations #3 and #6 will be discussed further at the next meeting.

e. Fields' MOU

Dr. Mercurio and Mr. Sequino have developed the cover memo for the MOU. The document has been forwarded to Dr. Gifford and Town Council President Michael Isaacs for review.

VIII. Discussion Items

a. East Greenwich High School Library Renovations

Mr. Romeo, SBS Project Manager, gave an update on renovations noting the demolition is near completion. The first floor should be finished tomorrow and the big push is on for the exterior wall. The electrical work is in progress and framing may begin in the next few days. Contractors are being pressed to orchestrate delivery and assembly. Two items will not be delivered until after the first of the year: a book cart and a chair. The renovation will be down to the wire. Mr. Romeo has contacted Mr. Pimentel and the fire department to orchestrate vacation time with town employees to ensure all staff members are available to sign off on the project. Mr. Romeo will meet with Mr. DaSilva from RIDE again tomorrow to ensure there are no issues that will affect reimbursement. The upper gym should be

back on line in in mid-February.

b. Cole lighting

Mr. Romeo, SBS Project Manager, said that Griffin has completed their work at Cole and we are expecting the report. Two total power supply units were replaced. Relay and sensor problems were found in the education wing. Griffin is in the process of ordering new materials. There are still two control panel issues affecting the exterior lights. The lights can now be turned on and off manually. Outside lights are being turned off manually each evening after all activities are finished. Mr. Romeo said the cause of the problem was surge protection and it happened during the hurricane. The results of the report should show whether the problem is with National Grid, design, or an installation issue. The report will be routed to SMMA, SBS, and to the Facilities' Director Mr. Wilmarth. Mr. Durant brought up the issue of the lights in the gym going off intermittently. This is the first Mr. Romeo heard about this issue and will look into it.

c. NEASC Report

An overview of the accreditation status was reviewed by Dr. Mercurio. A progress report needs to be submitted in August 2012 with a two-year progress report submitted in October 2013. The high school has set up a committee to work on NEASC recommendations. The NEASC report recommendations were discussed including "necessary upgrades to health and physical education areas." Mr. Podraza discussed the condition and size of the locker rooms. He added the physical space most likely does not match the upgrades that have been made. Dr. Gifford would like clarification as to what

the issues are with physical education. Dr. Mercurio said the issue must be insignificant or the NEASC Committee would have issued a warning. Dr. Mercurio thanked Mr. Podraza, Mrs. Dillon, and the faculty for their work preparing for the NEASC visit. He noted it is very difficult to complete a decennial visit from NEASC and not have warnings. An update will be given to the School Committee next year.

d. Race to the Top Update

Dr. Mercurio gave the Committee an update on Race to The Top and also discussed the gradual implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. East Greenwich is working with RIDE liaison Dr. Susan Schenk to implement the system. The union co-presidents have participated in the teacher evaluation committee offering feedback and assistance. Dr. Mercurio has met with teachers at each school gathering feedback and listening to their struggles. Mrs. Dillon and various teachers have been working on curriculum. The Dana Center is being used to develop the math curriculum aligning it to the common core. Mrs. Dillon discussed the student learning objectives (SLO). Mrs. Dillon has completely revamped the curriculum process using digital methods. She has also created a timeline for the process. Commissioner Gist has invited Dr. Mercurio to participate in Race to the Top discussions in Washington, D.C. January 12 -13, 2012.

e. Senior Project Exhibition

Dr. Mercurio had preliminary discussions with the Cole faculty regarding the early release at Cole for Senior Project Exhibition.

Discussions have included having Cole students work at home on specific on-line activities and the filming of teacher-led lessons that will be watched at home by the students and discussed the following day.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Sommer, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 9:27pm.

**CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY**